

BLONDIE



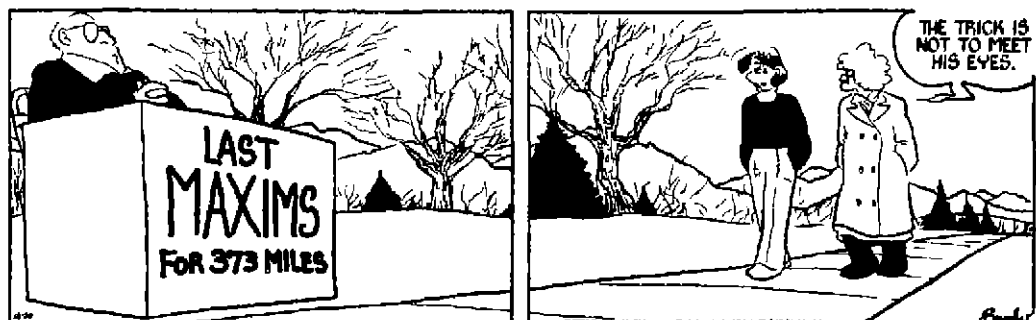
SALLY FORTH



THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN



3 CHICKWEED LANE



JUMP START



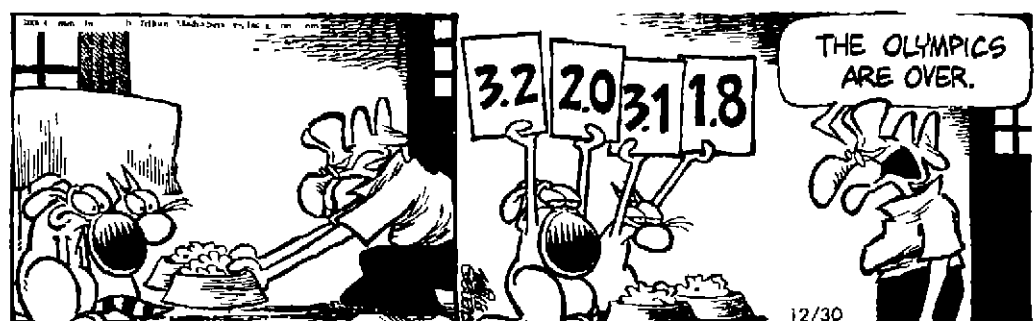
ROSE IS ROSE



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM



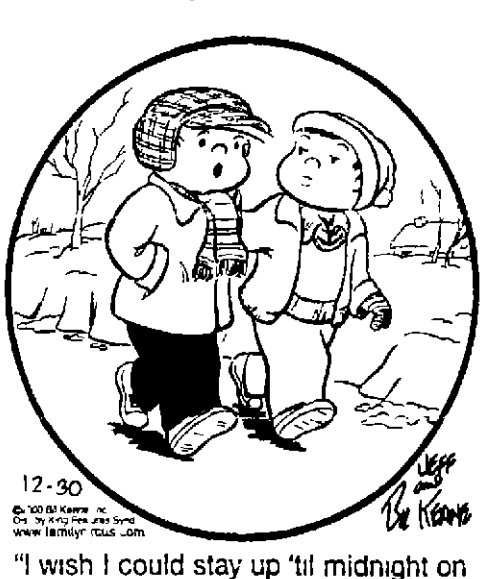
DILBERT



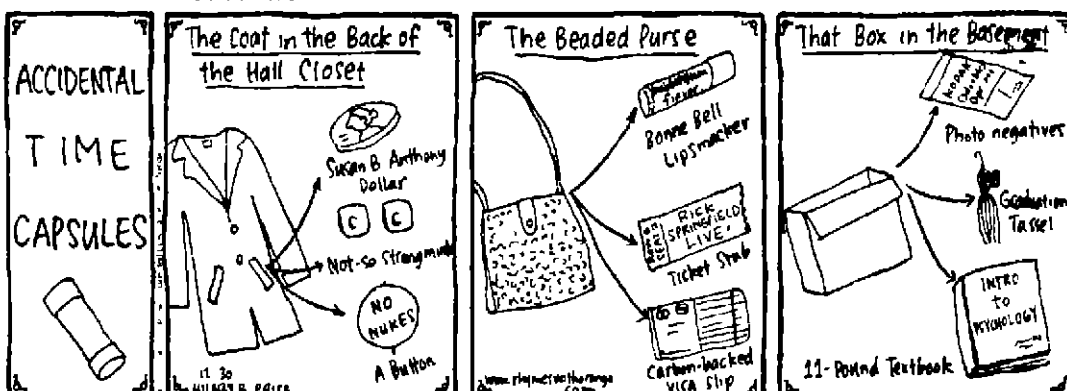
DENNIS THE MENACE



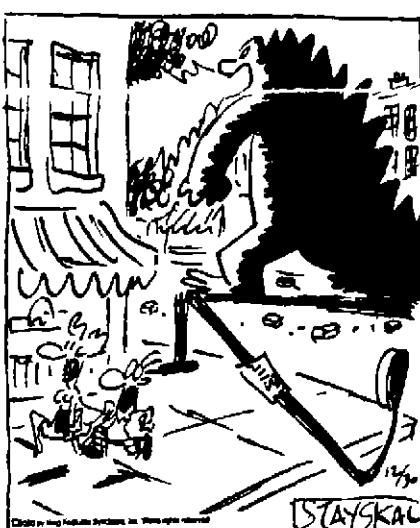
FAMILY CIRCUS



RHYMES WITH ORANGE



RALPH



Today's Birthdays

Singer-musician Bo Diddley is 72
Singer Skeeter Davis is 69 Actor Russ Tamblyn is 66 Baseball Hall-of-Famer Sandy Koufax is 65 Folk singer Paul Stookey is 63 Singer John Hartford is 63 Actor Joseph Bologna is 62 Actor Fred Ward is 58 Singer-musician Michael NeSmith is 58 Singer Davy Jones is 55 Singer Patti Smith is 54 NBC newscaster Matt Lauer is 43

I NEED HELP



SCRABBLE

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PAR SCORE 145-155 by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2 to 7 letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word using scoring directions at right. 7 letter words get 50 point bonus. Letters used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary (Norton Webster) and OSW Official Scrabble Words (Chambers). JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW 12-30-00

For solution, see Classified.

HOROSCOPE

For Sunday, Dec. 31, 2000

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Your wild side threatens to break loose. Satisfy the impulses with some carefree, decadent and extravagant behavior.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Remember that you can show other people the light without using brute force.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Operate from what you know, and do so at a speed that feels comfortable.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) If money is at stake, make sure that your facts are straight before making a decision.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Time slips away no matter what you wish. Follow someone else's lead if you don't know what to do next.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) It might take awhile for everyone to understand that you're the only person who really knows what's what.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Make sure that your ego isn't getting the better of you, as a stranger might be seducing you with cheap flattery.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) On other days, your current responsibilities might overwhelm you, but right now, they seem like second nature.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Keep your wits about you when dealing with distraught family or friends.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) A solid grasp of the facts makes you persuasive in the midst of a tricky debate.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You need your presence of mind to deal with a personal problem.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Deal with your backlog before you drown in it.

WORD SLEUTH

EACH LETTER USED TWICE

C B Y W T R P M K I F D B Y W
U S Q O H L M K I L S F D B Z
S X W U O L S E S A E P P A S
Q T A R R A I G N I N G O N R
L E O J S P H F D B I C A Y A
W A V H E P T T N A T A N S E
Q M P N S A L K I L S H O F P
E M C N H T B Z Y I E T W D P
V A U O O S O R Q B T P N E A
M T L O E J I H H O N F E E E
E E T N R E D D E R I P D D R

Friday's unused clue: DAVID

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Saturday's unused clue: FELLOW MEMBER OF A TEAM

Appl. Daid. Netant. Reappear.
Appears. Horseshoe. Noon. Reader.
Arranging. Holohois. Noos. Tooter.
Blabial. Intestines. Peep.

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For solution, see Classified.

ACES

By Bobby Wolff

knows that a typical holdup play aims at isolating a defender's long suit. Nevertheless, even a more experienced declarer might overlook another reason to make a holdup play. When West leads the heart trey to East's jack, should South hold up his ace? Since the lead of the trey eliminates the chance of a 6-2 heart split, how can declarer hope to isolate the threat? Giving up on isolating hearts, many would win the ace and cash four club winners, looking for clues. West discards three spades up the line and South must tackle diamonds with little to guide him. He cashes dummy's king and his ace and then leads low toward dummy's Q-10. When West follows low, South tries to drop the jack and South holds himself to only eight tricks. Assuming no deceptive plays by the defenders, a holdup at trick one gives South an opportunity to discover the opposing distribution. When East returns his heart seven at trick two, South takes note of West's heart four. Had West held five hearts, he would have played his deuce on the second round. Therefore, South assumes it is East who has the greater length in hearts. How does this help South? With West holding only one club, declarer assumes West began with three four card suits, clarifying the best way to tackle diamonds. He cashes the king and ace, and when no jack drops, he takes a finesse against West's jack and claims a well-earned game.

NORTH 12-20 A
7-4-3
8-5
K Q 10-3
A J 7-5

EAST
A 9-8-2
K 10-4-3
J 9-7-2
6-5
9-8-3-2

SOUTH
A 10-6-3
A-6
A-8-4
K Q 10-6

Vulnerable: North-South
Dealer: South

The bidding
South West North East
1 NT Pass 3 NT All pass

Opening lead: Heart trey

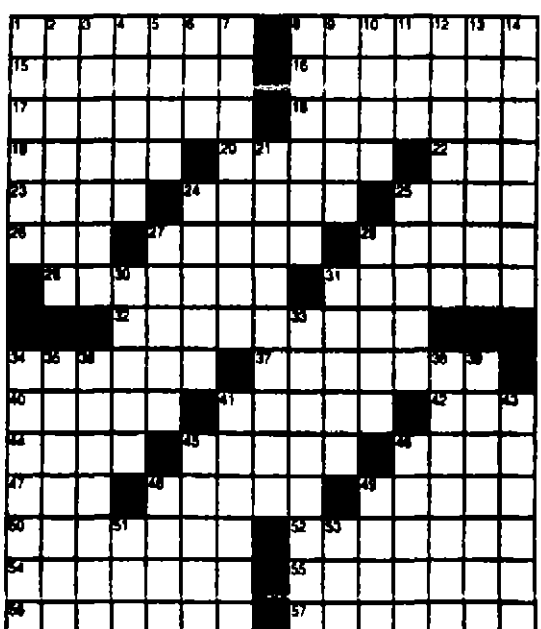
N.Y. TIMES CROSSWORD

No. 1118

- ACROSS**
- 1 Holdup
 - 8 Folded
 - 15 Not varied at all
 - 16 Good reception
 - 17 Where some jams are made
 - 18 It may be stuck in a corner
 - 19 Put away
 - 20 Nat King Cole's "Things Money Can't Buy"
 - 22 N.F.L. positions
 - 23 Sister of Ares
 - 24 Early statistical software
 - 25 1970's baseball All-Star Colbert
 - 26 Study
 - 27 Designer who popularized the miniskirt
 - 28 1930's-40's Czech president
 - 29 Aftermaths
 - 31 Pate Fountain collaborator
 - 32 Challenge
 - 34 Derelict
 - 37 Part of a score
 - 40 Opening in the Midwest?
 - 41 Lemon, maybe
 - 42 Speaker's no-nos
 - 44 Fix
 - 45 Balbo of the Black Shirt Militia
 - 46 "Power Lunch" network
 - 47 Step
 - 48 Sore spots?
 - 49 Collection of Hindu truths
 - 50 Shrubs of the heath family
 - 52 Hand
 - 54 monkey-look
 - 55 Extemporizes
 - 56 Looks out of a tower, in a fairy tale
 - 57 Anew
- DOWN**
- 1 Directed
 - 2 Star in Scorpius
 - 3 Soothing medicine
 - 4 Cap locales
 - 5 Baseball immortal, familiarly
 - 6 Baseball immortal
 - 7 Golf competition
 - 8 Campus in Brookville, L.I.
 - 9 Be efficient with
 - 10 In addition
 - 11 Katzenjammer cry
 - 12 Higher-ups?
 - 13 One with issues?
 - 14 Least bright
 - 21 Central Park sight
 - 24 Some showdowns
 - 25 "Toward Freedom" autobiographer
 - 27 Reprais
 - 28 Like a fan's food
 - 30 Sticks in a cabinet

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

P I B B S A M O S P A S T
S N E E Y A U T H E S C E
A D D E D A T T R A C T I O N
L I S T E N S T O R E A S O N
T A I L E D P A L A T E
E N D E D U P M E S S I E R
R A E S P O K A N E D R S
L O S
O C C W R A P U P S C S A
E A R L I E R R E C H O O M
S T E E L E T H E A S P
I N H A V E N T G O T A C L U E
R O S I E T H E R I V E T E R
E D E N E R O D E N A M E
D E S E R U M O R T R E S



- 31 Town in a 1945 Pulitzer winner
- 33 Recties with ease
- 34 Barricade
- 35 Dartmouth founder
- 36 Bottle contents maybe
- 38 Scrawny
- 39 Involve
- 41 Failures to move
- 43 Less than needed
- 45 Part of an ancient trio
- 46 Affected modesty, with "the"
- 48 Evening hour, in Madrid
- 49 Consideration
- 51 U.S.N. officers
- 53 Nonstandard Abbr.
- Answers to any three clues in this puzzle are available by touch-tone phone 1-800-426-5656 (95¢ per minute). Annual subscriptions are available for the best of Sunday crosswords from the last 50 years: 1-888-7 ACROSS